

Hindley, John I.

Indian Legends.

NANABUSH,

THE OJIBBEWAY SAVIOUR.

MOOSH-KUH-UNG,

—) OR (—

THE FLOOD.

BY THE

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OF BARRIE.

1885.

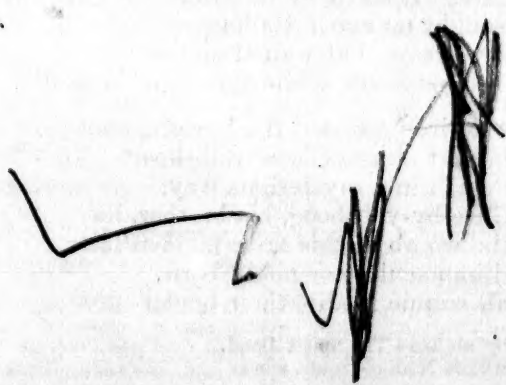


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INTRODUCTION.

The matter contained in these legends has been collected directly from the tribe of Ojibbewa Indians, dwelling on the North Shore and at French Bay. The author has taken nothing from any book on the subject, but has obtained his knowledge from personal experience among the Indians, and from Missionaries among them. He desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to Mr. John L. Lister, who laboured for years among the Ojibbewas. The Indian is allowed to tell his own story, and only one or two departures have been made, these will be noticed by the reader, as they are enclosed in brackets. The author has long felt that we know too little of our Canadian Red Men, hence this poem.



INDIAN LEGENDS.

LEGEND OF NANABUSH.

Where Father Huron laps the rugged shores
Of Manitoulin's Isle, and where Cape Hurde
And Cabot's Head projecting, face the North,
And point to other isles magnificent
Which lie beneath the North Shore's rocky brow;
'Tis here hath found a home that tribe renowned,
The far-famed children of great Nanabush,
Canadian Red Men named Ojibbewas.
Who tell in legends lengthy, strange and grand,
How came their bold progenitor to earth;
And how he wrought and warred prodigiously—
What miracles performed, what foes he slew—
What blessings he procured for human kind.

They thus narrate:—Ma-we-shah (long ago)
There lived an aged man, to whom were born
Twelve stalwart sons—one only daughter fair,
Whose queenly beauty was surpassed alone
By maiden virtue and true modesty.

She sought no marital alliances
With dusky braves, but waited on her sire,
And cheered his heart, while age crept on apace.

A strange desire possessed the burning soul
Of Nanabush, to leave Chee-by ah-kee,*
And visit earth in a mysterious way.
So with Chee-by-yah-boog, his brother, he
Entered the womb of this same maiden fair;
Conceived immaculate or nobly born
Of * Shah-wunne Nodin, their tender sire.

*Chee-by ah-kee—The Spirit Land.

*Shah-wunne Nodin—South wind.

Conscious they rest, and in deep anger hear
Her father and her brothers harshly chide
The unhappy maid, for staining their fair fame
With foul dishonour by unseemly deed.

They drive her forth alone—thus she abides
Until the birth of these illustrious twins.
O'ercome with grief, the broken-hearted maid
Pours out her life the hour the babes were born,
And flies immortal to the Spirit Land.

The twins survive,—nor helpless they—robust
They scour the forests o'er ere one hour old—
Pluck the wild fruits, and dig the esculent
Until they both arrive at man's estate.

Greatest of this great pair was Nanabush,
Who soon becomes † neb-wa-kah-win (the wise),
Converses freely with the birds and beasts,
With trees, and stones, and even mother earth.

In contemplation deep his time is spent
Within ‡ wig-wa-sah-gum-mig (his bark lodge)
Thinking of self alone, till self appears
Greater than all mankind—more powerful
Even than ** ah-nah-mah-kum-mig muh-ne-doog,
(Inferior Spirits subterranean),

Yea, greater than the mighty Manitou.
Such pride impunibly can ne'er prevail,
To Nanabush must quaff the cup of grief.

I loved his brother twin Chee-bi-yah-boog,
As only twins can love.

Solicitous,

He solemn warns his brother to beware
The ice-bound lake, where dwelt their common foe.
*Wah-bi-mee-zhee-be-zhee and all his braves.

Chee-by-yah-boog, though good, and brave, and true,
A mighty nimrod, fired with thrust of game
Forgets th' repeated warning, rashly treads
Th' enchanted lake; is seized, dragged down and slain
By their rapacious foe the lion white.

Within his tent of bark great Nanabush
Waits long and anxious the return of him

†Neb-wa-kah-win—The wise one.

‡Wig-wa-sah-gum-mig—A bark lodge.

**Ah-nah-mah-kum-mig muh-ne-doog—Underground Spirits.

*Wah-bi-mee-zhee be zhee—The White Lion.

Whose very soul seems blended with his own.
He comes not.

Quick he seeks the haunts
Of his old friends within the forest deep ;
Questions both beast and bird if they have seen
The loved, the lost, the mourned Chee-bi-yah-boog.
But Kee-che-†Muh-ne-doo has closed the mouth
Of every beast and bird lest he betray
The secret of the hunter's cruel fate.
So Nanabush returns disconsolate ;
And sitting down within his lonely tent,
He for the lost one raises this lament.

LAMENT OF NANABUSH.

Chee-bi-yah-boog ! Chee-bi-yah-boog !
My brother good, and brave, and true ;
I search the forest through and through,
I cry in vain Chee-bi-yah-boog.

I ask the birds, but they are dumb,
I ask the beasts if they can tell
Within what haunt or rocky dell
I may into thy presence come.

Alas, great Kee-che Muh-ne-doo
Has closed their mouths they dare not speak,
Lest he his vengeance on them wreak,
They fly affrighted from my view.

I to my lonely tent am borne
On wings of hope, mahap to gain
One glimpse of thee returned again—
'Tis vain, alone I'm left to mourn.

There hangs untouched the flitch of moose
Prepared for thee—that empty place
To all that now recalls thy face—
Alas ! Alas ! Chee-bi-yah-boog.

Chee-bi-yah-boog ! Chee-bi-yah-boog !
Can it be true that thou didst choose
The happy hunting grounds of light
Which fill the Indian with delight ?
Or did the cruel lion white
Plunge thee in everlasting night ?
How shall I know Chee-bi-yah-boog ?

†Kee-che-Muh-ne-doo—The Great Spirit.

Didst thou my solemn warning take
And shun the dread enchanted lake?
What gloomy fears within me rise!
What bitter tears bedim mine eyes!
What poignant grief evokes my cries!
My groans shall rend both earth and skies
For thee my lost Chee-bi-yah-booz.

O wilt thou never more return?
And must I always dwell alone,
Convulse my frame with piteous groan?
Then shall my very flesh and bone
Consume with grief and in me burn
Till breaks my heart Chee-bi-yah-booz.

'Twas thus did Nanabush lament;
And ere his mighty grief was spent
The very rocks in twain were rent.

For as the spasms upon him came,
And shook with violence his frame,
He to the earth transmits the same.

Which seems in terror to upheave
Till streams their native courses leave—
New springs the solid lime-stone cleave.

Huge rocks roll down the mountain's side—
Th' affrighted heavens in darkness hide;
And stars are plunged beneath the tide.

All nature seems to sympathize—
The beasts and birds mingle their cries
With those of Nanabush, the wise.

All tribes of men, (en-ni-ne-wug)
And looses spirits (Muh-ne-doog)
In council meet * ah-wa-se-wug.

And all implore the Spirit Great
His awful anger to abate
And shield them from impending fate.

For dire destruction threatens all,
Such grief does Nanabush entrall,
So on the Manitou they call.

*Ah-wa-see-wug—Animals.

And humbly ask him to restore
To Nanabush the peace of yore,
And they will serve him evermore.

The Spirit listens to their cries,
And bids Chee-bi-yah-booze arise,
Who forthwith to his brother hies.

Without the camp he waiting stands
To see what Nanabush commands;
And gently knocks with trembling hands.

The sor'wing brother rises not,
Nor even asks him what he sought,
For grief has chained him to the spot.

At length he asks in accents brief,—
"Who dares invade the tent of grief,
Nor solace bring to my relief.

"Tis * Ke-shee mau," he humbly said,
Returned the living from the dead;
Then cheer thy heart, and raise thy head."

Up from the ground the mourner sprung,
His transport thus unloosed his tongue,
In ecstasy he rapturous sung:—

SONG OF NANABUSH.

My loved, my lost, Chee-bi-yah-booze!
Can I believe the joyful news
That once again I hear thy voice?
Full deep for thee I've groaned and sighed,
Full loud for thee I've wept and cried,
And mourned for thee as one who died,
But now, alas! what is my choice?

Should I receive thee back alive,
Can I the sneering laugh survive
Of God's and men who heard my grief,
Break forth in mourning such as mine,
On which the heavens refused to shine?
They conscious are 'twas e'en divine,
Then can I, dare I find relief?

*Kee-shee mau—Younger brother.

And take me to thy breast once more ?

I love thee brother as of yore,
And long again to see thy face ;
But yet I cannot brook the scorn
Of Gods, and men ignobly born ;
If thou must vanish e'er the morn,
And thus me rescue from disgrace.

Alas ! for this unwelcome truth
Is forced on me—In tender youth,
Death claimed and took thee for his son,
And so shall each Ojibbewa
Be early called by death away
To happy hunting fields of day,
And leave his friends on earth alone.

Take then * Ku-kun-zha in thy hand.
This † mo-ka-maun and seek a land,
‡ Epun-gis-he-mook (towards the setting sun).
A straight, smooth path to it prepare,—
Build there a home with tender care,—
Kindle a fire that each may share
Such bliss when life's short course is run.

So shall each Red Man happy be
In hope of this Chee-by ah-kee
When ends this fitful dream below ;
Boldly he shall death's valley dare,—
Enter with joy that dwelling fair,
Which thou, my brother, shall prepare
For all who in thy footsteps go.

Then Nanabush from out the embers grasped
A burning brand, and thrust the door ajar
He thrust the same together with a knife
Saying :—

" My loved Chee-bi-yah-booz farewell !
No more I see thy face, nor grasp thy hand ;—
Deep in my heart thine image still shalt dwell
Until I seek thee in the Better land.

Then take this brand and trusty hunting knife
And hie thee onward towards the sunny west ;—
Our paths divergent—yet in either life,
In blessing others we ourselves are blest.

*Ku-kun-zha—Coal of fire.

†Mo-ka-maun—Hunting knife.

‡Epun gis-he-mook—Towards the setting sun—West.

'Twas thus he spoke, obedient to the word,
Chee-bi-yah-boo, grasping the knife and fire
Instantly vanishes towards the west.

Now Nanabush retires within his tent ;
And soon his loving heart repentant throbs,
And sorely for his unnatural deed.
That he, his brother, whom the gods restored,
Should not receive with open arms again.
Nor e'en admit him to his camp once more ;
Nor parting shake his hand, nor even snatch
One brief glance of that once familiar face.
He rushes forth in frenzy ; calls aloud
Come back ! come back, Chee-bi-yah-boo, come
back !

Why did I bid thee go from me again ?
Return, return, or else my heart will break.

But no response— Chee-bi-yah-boo is gone
Vanished complete to * e-pun-gis-he-mook.

Entering his lonely wigwam once again,
Thrice lonely now, since unfraternal he
Had heartless driven his brother from its door.
In deep contrition Nanabush sits down ;
His heavy heart pours out its tide of woe.

This second burst of grief, e'en as before,
With violence convulsed the earth and heavens ;
And all the attending horrors menace men,
And birds and beasts, as when before they met
In council to invoke the Manitou.

Affrighted they in solemn concert meet ;
And all the Mighty Spirit's mercy me ;
Who bows unto their cry a graceful ear ;
Yet not again restores Chee-bi-yah-boo ;
But sends to Nanabush the grim * muh-qwah
Inviting him to come to ** ish-pe-ming ;
Where he all wisdom and sustaining strength,
For this dark dispensation shall obtain.

But Nanabush bowed down with deepest grief ;
Sitting with hidden face between his knees,
Quite deaf to all entreaties, thus does he
The very presence of Muh-qwah ignore.
Others are sent with similar results ;
He heeds not ; but in silent sorrow sits.

* E-pun-gis-he-mook—The west or sunset.

* Muh-qwah—Bear.

** Ish-pe-ming—Heaven.

Till † wa-bi mee-zik on the scene appears.
 In gentle terms he eloquently pleads,
 Arguing powerfully in words of love ;
 So long, so earnestly, that Nanabush
 At length in silence rises to his feet—
 As wa-bi mee-zik leads he follows on ;
 And slowly treads the tracks the otter makes.

At length the entrance into ish-pe-ming
 By trap-door barred, transported they espy ;
 Which soon is opened, and they ushered are
 Into the presence of the Spirit Great.
 Who welcomes Nanabush with cordial words,
 And gently him convinces of his pride
 And vain imaginings, by which he thought
 Himself as mighty as the Manitou.
 Compared with whom now Nanabush appears
 As nothing ; yea his boasted powers
 Of nature and of magic, are the gifts
 Of the Great Spirit unto whom alone
 Belongs the attribute omnipotent.
 In deep humility then Nanabush
 Acknowledges his vaunting, sinful pride,
 And feels his grief has been his richest boon.
 A being changed, he dwells in ish-pe-ming
 Some length of time, and then to earth returns,
 Receives the gift * pun-je-goos-im composed
 Of pelt of weasel, mink, or otter white,
 Granted by the Great Spirit to mankind,
 That they surcease of sorrow, cure of ills
 To which the flesh is subject might obtain.
 The Spirit also unto him imparts
 Knowledge of all such songs those Red men sing.
 Who now observe the strange religious rites
 Which appertain to that religion new,
 Great Nanabush brought down from ish-pe-ming,
 Himself inducted by the Spirit Great
 Into these solemn, sacred mysteries ;
 He taught according to the Manitou
 To all the tribe now called Ojibbewa.
 He taught them honesty : to scorn to take
 The venison killed by another's hand,
 Pendant on branch of tree. Nor e'en to claim
 The game another's gun the skin abraded.
 Nor stealthy steal from out the cunning snare

† Wa-bi mee-gik—The white otter.

* Pun-je-goos-im—Medicine bag.

That which some hunter's wisdom had entrapped.
Neither to tread with sacriligious feet
The empty camp of absent brave to filch,
Trifle or treasure he might leave behind.

He taught the Indian wife watching to wait
Her hungry husband's home-returning feet ;
To run to meet him with a cheerful smile ;
His moccasins, now wet, and travel-stained,
To loose with loving hands from off his feet,
To place a mat near by the cheerful fire,
On which he might recline his wearied limbs—
To cook of food a plentiful supply,
That he his appetite might satiate
E'er she him questioned of his hunt's success.

Thus might they their integrity maintain
Through all the trying, tortuous, trail of life ;
And such alone, at length should reach the goal
Chee-by ah-kee—the sunny Spirit land.

Employed in labors love inspired on earth,
Our hero lived comparative content ;
Yet ever and anon his heart reverts
Unto the sore bereavement of the past,
And longs to see the lost Chee-by-yah-booz.

The Spirit Great in mercy condescends
To have compassion on his lonely heart.
For solace in his sorrow, sends straitway
Me-ge-ze, which the rolling clouds can pierce.
Of plumage grand, of pinion powerful
To bear him to and fro upon the earth,
Quite cheered with which he quells his surging soul,
And humbly bows beneath the chastening rod.

*Me-ge-ze—The eagle.



THE DELUGE.

(MOOSH-KUH-UNG.)

Just as the sun's last slanting silent rays
Gave notice that his daily course was run ;
The hero of our tale the shingled shore
Of the enchanted lake in silence trode.

Wrapped deep in thought ; he suddenly espies
A substance tossed upon the billows' breast.
Curious to know what this strange sight might be,
He calls on * kish-ke-mah-ze to explain.
The bird impelled by claim imperious
Of hunger, hurries on in quest of food,
Refusing to refrain for idle talk,
Responds in negative, necessity
Has higher claims than merely pleasures' plea.

Then Nanabush extends to him this bribe,
If he this mystery will stoop to solve ;
To paint the plumage of his beating breast
In brilliant colors ; neither this alone ;
To comb the feathers of his head erect,
Enhancing much his dignity and grace.
O'ercome by offers such as these, the bird
Approached and asked what favor he desired.

Then Nanabush points out the substance white
Tossing upon the tide ; and bids him tell
How came it there ; and what its origin.
The bird replied, " Can you be ignorant
Of such portentous facts as this involves ?
For that which is the sport of winds and waves
Was once a portion of the hunter brave,
Your brother loved and lost so long ago ;
Who by the treachery and cruel claws
Of wa-bi-mee-zhee-be-zhee did perish here."

Such news bestirs the soul of Nanabush,
And all attention, anxiously he asks
What are the haunts and habits of his foe.

His feathered friend, solicited, replies :—
" When the enchanted lake is lulled to rest,
Wa-bi-mee-zhee-be-zhee and all his braves,

*Kish-ke-mah-ze—Kingfisher.

Upon a certain soft and sandy shore
Beneath the sun's declining rays are seen
Desporting on the beach, or wrapped in sleep."

Rejoicing inwardly, he paints the breast,
Combs up the tuft on Kish-ke-mah-ze's head ;
Who forthwith leaves, his supper soon to seek.

Now Nanabush with thrilling, throbbing thoughts,
And step elastic strides his homeward way ;
Thirsting for blood—the lion white must die.

His straightest, sharpest shaft he quick selects,
And mourns to-morrow's sun is slow to rise.
No sooner has its golden ear recrossed
The line meridian, than he seeks the shore
Where he has learned his foes are wont to meet.

To hide his presence from the lion white,
He must assume some unsuspected form.
Hence by that power, inherent in himself,
His metamorphoses is quickly made ;
And what was Nanabush is now a tree
By storm despoiled of every branch and bough
He stands a stub upon the sandy shore.

He seeks the Spirits' favour him to send
Those gentle winds and waves, in which alone
His enemy e'er seeks the shingled strand.

He long the silver surface scanned in vain
With anxious eye ;—at length two lusty loons
With dismal screams its crystal surface cleave ;
And spreading wide their pinions fly afar.
Encouraged by the fear the * maun displayed
Intent he watches for his wily foe.

At length the enchanted billows boil and beat,
And teem with life in every living form
Of burly beast, and subtle serpent shape.
Not only wa-bi-mee-zhee-be-zhee appears,
But by his side among the horrid host
He sees † ooga-wush-kwa mee-zhee-be-zhee,
Cousin to him who slew Chee-bi-zah-booz.

They all espy the unaccustomed form
Of tree truncated standing on the shore,
Where no such stem had previously appeared.

*Maun—Leons.

† Ooga-wush-kwa mee-ghe-be-ghee—Yellow lion.

Suspicious lest some treachery betray
 Them to their ruin, all concerted cry—
 "Tis surely Nanabush our common foe."

Whereat † ke-che-ke-na-big boastingly,
 With subtle skill shaking his skaly skin,
 And crest courageous, fairly flies to face
 The foe suspected, folds him in his coils,
 And circling round his throat with cruel crush,
 Bound to determine what his nature was.

By strangulation he had surely won
 His object, had not Nanabush invoked
 The Spirit's secret and sustaining aid.

The reptile writhes and quite exhausts himself,
 But not one sign of conscious pain is seen;
 Our hero suffers stoically the strain.

At length the serpent fully satisfied
 That all their fears were groundless and absurd,
 Relaxed his coils and to the sport returned.

Suspicious still, Kee-che mah-qwah declares
 No tree e'er stood on that secluded spot;
 So fiercely he the doubtful form assails,
 With tooth and claw he tests its genuineness,
 Whether 'tis wood or Nanabush in truth.

His cruel claws plough furrows deep and long
 About the face and head—his horrid hug
 Is tried with thew most dreadful to endure;
 But grimly grins, and sternly stands his foe.
 And thus defies the grizzly's giant grip.

Quite foiled Muh-qwah reports on his return—
 'Tis but a tree; no latent foe could lie
 Concealed in tree or form inanimate,
 Suffering in silence such severe ordeal.

So all in unison at once agree
 That form of tree denuded long had stood,
 And storm survived unnoticed or unseen.

Nothing to fear, the games go on apace,
 Until exhausted all lie down to sleep,
 By † kwin-gwis guarded who as sentry sits.

†Ke-che-ke-na-big—Gt boa constrictor.

*Kee-chee-mah-qwah—Grizzly bear.

†Kwin-gwis—Chipmunk.

Now Nanabush assumes his native shape,
And creeping cautiously towards the foe,
All wrapped in silent slumber on the shore.

His proud breast heaves, his dark eye flashes fire,
For surely the auspicious hour has come
When he shall glut his vengeance on the foe
Who in his brother's blood embued his fangs.

But kwin-gwis all alert and quite alarmed
Begins by chatter the whole host to warn.

Silenced by bribes which Nanabush extends ;
Consents to silence, even condescends
To aid our hero's subtle plans and plots
And give him access to the Lion White.

Kwin-gwis enlisted thus the task performs,
Mendaceously he manages to still,
* Mee-gik whom his first warning had aroused
And falsely tells him that he only chide
† Teen-dees who surreptitiously had stol'n
His supper succulent which he had shelled.

Me-gik, with drowsy eye and solemn tone,
Exhorts him "brethren always should agree,"
Though feeling this was easier said than done ;
(Preaching is easy, practice difficult ;
Yet some must preach or discord and dismay
Would soon prevail to earth's remotest bounds).

With mind relieved and fears dispelled mee-gik
Composed himself once more to balmy sleep.

Seizing the offered opportunity,
Stepping with stride elastic, Nanabush
Passing the sleeping foes which lie between
Him and his hated enemy he soon
Approaches and attacks the Lion White.

Having determined where his beating heart
Pulsated, he a pointed, polished shaft
Drove home with deadly aim, as he supposed.

His furious foe awoke with deafening roar,
And mad with pain plunges beneath the tide,
Followed by all the panic-stricken horde,
Who dared no longer face the fiercest foe.

*Mee-gik—The Otter.

†Teen-dees—Blue-jay.

Elated by his prowess and success
 By which his foes were thus discomfited,
 He homeward wends his winding way with joy ;
 Exulting wa-bi mee-zhe-be-zhee the great
 Is slain by Nanabush, whose brother loved
 The lion shew at the enchanted lake.

Some days elapsed.

As Nanabush bestrode
 The forests wild, he met * min-de-moya
 Loaded with bass-wood bark of texture fine ;
 Whom he accosts in blandest tones to attempt
 If he might ascertain whom she may be ;
 And with what purpose this same burden bears.

But she by age and long experience shrewd,
 Suspects that he is neither more nor less
 Than Nanabush, her chief's most deadly foe.

He by this charge confronted, skilfully
 Lulls her suspicions, telling her, in truth,
 Had he been Nanabush, he had ere now
 Bereft her of her life, nor talking there
 Had wasted time to bandy useless words.

He gathers gradually from this old crone
 That ** O-dan-a lies far beneath the waves
 Of the enchanted lake, where still exists
 The Lion White, though wounded nigh to death.

She tells him 'tis her honoured lot to wait
 With one more min-de-moya on her chief.
 In wigwam quite secluded they abide,
 Seeking by this enchantment to extract
 The subtle shaft which Nanabush had driven
 Quite near the heart of their beloved chief.

She thus narrates that circling round his couch,
 They sing this sacred song in tones of grief,—
 † Min-doo-ge-maum ! min-doo-ge-maum ! wa-hooh !
 Min-doo-ge-maum ! wa-hooh ! wah ! wah ! wah ! wah !

As for the linden lines, they mean to make
 Therewith a telegraph along the shores
 Of all the lake enchanted, and whereby
 They are apprised of any foul attempt
 Of Nanabush their village to invade.

*Min-de-moya—Indian granny.

**O-dan-a—Village.

†Min-doo-ge-maum—My chief ; wa-hooh and wah, interjections of sorrow.

For as he trod the shores his feet would strike
Against this bark, and warn the Lior White
Of the dread presence of his enemy ;
Who all his braves might with one call convene
And wreak their vengeance on a common foe.

He from this dusky, wrinkled dame obtains
Knowledge of that mysterious path which led
Down to O-dan-a, where his enemy
Still holds tenaciously the thread of life.

Having learned all the aged crone could tell
He grasps her hoary head with giant grip ;
And, as a feather tossed upon the tide,
So he this wretched woman shook and tossed
Till flesh and bone fell from her emptied skin.

Almost intact, this Nanabush retains ;
And by his wondrous power miraculous
His form diminishes, until within
The same he can esconce himself with care ;
And thus conceal his dread identity,
From all the foes o-dan-a's strongholds hide.

Taking as honoured guide * o-muh-kuh-kee,
He hastens down the hidden highway swift,
And soon with joy the royal wigwam spies
Wherein is hid his foe the Lion White.

The other crone suspecting something wrong,
Asks many questions of the long delay
And strange appearance of her late ally.

To none of these our hero makes reply,
But with unerring aim he smite her down—
One mighty mortal blow, and all is o'er ;
Her life and questions end in tragic death ;
Sad warning to the over-curious mind.

Entering the royal tent he soon perceives
The arrow, which his prowess once hand plunged
Quite deep into the sturdy, stubborn side
Of his dread enemy, is part withdrawn.

He sudden seized the same between his teeth,
And with one potent thrust he drove it through
The throbbing heart of his detested foe ;
Who not one roar can utter e'er his life
Pours out with his heart's blood in torrent red.

*O-muh kuh-kee.—Frog.

He fiercely now the foe recumbent flays
 With soul revengeful, still insatiate;
 Nothing can quench that horrid, raging thirst
 But flesh of vanquished foe. He then proceeds
 To cook the banquet that he there may glut
 His vengeance fully, and his appetite,
 Sharpened by retribution long delayed,
 Appease at length by famous feast prolonged.

But soon a long and deafening cry evokes
 The echoes of o-da-na * (like to that
 Which broke the silence of the midnight air
 In Egypt, when the messenger of death
 Entered each home and slew all the first born,
 Or when that oriental tyrant bade
 His heartless soldiers steep their swords in blood,
 Nor stay for Rachel's cry; but extirpate
 The babes of Bethlehem from two years old.)

So rang that startling shout in o-da-na:—
 "Awake! awake! to arms! for Nanabush
 Has slain our chieftian true, the Lion White."

With clash and clamour all the hosts convene
 And rush concerted on the common foe.

Against such odds, in open war he deems
 It not expedient to contest the ground,
 So refuge seeks in flight. They press him sore,
 But swift of foot he safely gains the shore;
 Treads solid earth, and breathes the higher air.

But with alarm he sees the enchanted lake
 Upheave its angry waters now surcharged
 With woeful vengeance, and rush madly on
 In swift pursuit of his retreating feet.

He scales the highest mountain; nor till then
 Does he the fleetness of his footsteps stay.
 Gazing athwart the distance he traversed,
 He sees the vengeful torrent toiling on.

It fills the valleys—climbs the mountain's side;
 Kisses with cold and clammy lip its peak,
 And laps the feet and limbs of Nanabush,
 Determined quite to doom the direful death
 The fell destroyer of the Lion White.

*Those illustrations do not appear in the original legend.

But he alert, seizes the tall * shin-gwauk
And lithly up its living trunk he glides
Until between him and his cruel foe
There intervened three hundred feet of space.

Yet to his horror, higher still and higher
He saw, inimical the element,
Creep up insidious, till its waters wash
His feet once more, and threaten to submerge
Him neath the billow, there bereft of life,
Shall buried be ambitious hopes and plans.
And not till then wa-bi mee-zhee-be-zhee
Shall fully be revenged, and rest in peace.

But Nanabush addressed the pine tree thus :—
“ Good tree, I thee invoke, extend thyself,
Stretch every fibre, strain thy utmost strength ;—
Show other trees how high thy top can reach ;
Straighter and statlier thou then shalt stand
Than any monarch of the forest kind.
Yea strive to pierce the caracoling clouds,—
Become the peerless prince of pine trees great,—
Yet to thyself in feats of giant growth
A name immortal, coveted by all.”

Thus flattered and invoked the tree complies.
And thrice appealed, adds to its towering height,
Till, strained to utmost tension, it exclaims,
“ Now Nanabush my efforts here must cease ;
For I have gained the highest point supreme
Possible to anything in shape of tree.”
Yet still the vengeful flood creeps up apace
Determined quite to doom its foe to death.

At length its raging waters cease to rise,
And stay their course just as the eddying tide,
Exhausted quite, had reached the upturned chin
Of Nanabush upon the pine tree's top ;
And thus he 'scapes the torrents' threat'ning fate.

Glancing around he spies both men and beasts,
Some swimming for dear life, some clinging fast
To drift-wood driven along the surging surf,
Despair and desperation in each eye.

*Shin-gwauk—Pine tree.

He calls aloud to * me-gik and † ah-mik
 Also to ‡ wahg-hushk, "Come, my brethren, here,
 Let us convene, in sage council consult
 As to our future ; since the flood prevails
 O'er all the earth below, we must prepare
 A home befitting to our higher claims ;
 For 'tis preposterous quite to think of life
 While water covers all the face of earth.

Your feats of diving all the world admits ;
 To one of you the palm belongs 'tis plain ;—
 An opportunity presents itself
 By which this question may be set at rest
 For all the future, and that one the prince
 Of divers shall be called, who shall descend
 Through this dark depth of waters, and obtain
 A modicum of earth, by which I may
 Upbuild another world since this is lost,
 And deluge-wrapped in everlasting night.

Me-gik ambitious, first the task essays,
 And plunges down the unknown, unfathomed deep.
 In breathless silence all the rest survey
 The waters' surface, till alas they see
 The otter float ; but life is quite extinct.

Ah-mik now tries his skill, but like me-gik,
 He too returns a corpse for want of breath.
 But Nanabush with gentle, loving hands
 Takes each, and by his mighty power divine
 Breathes into them again the breath of life.

The trying task on wahg-hushk now devolves
 To pierce these darksome depths, and earth obtain,
 Or ruthless ruin is the lot of all.

He, nothing daunted, takes the momentous plunge,
 And after long delay, and boding fears,
 He lifeless rises to the waters' crest.

Then Nanabush with anxious eye intent,
 Searches his paws, and opens wide his mouth ;
 And with a cry of joy exclaims aloud :—
 " Here is the clay ! another world we build."

*Me-gik—Otter.

†Ah-mik—Beaver.

‡Wahg-hushk—Musk-rat.

He soon restores the brave musk-rat to life ;
With high encomiums on his daring deed,
His title gives, "*The Prince of Divers all.*"

Then taking in his hand the precious clay,
He dries the same by friction 'tween his palms
And casts it forth upon the waters wide.

When, wondrous power, it soon assumes the shape
And beauty of an isle, perfect and grand.
To which he calls all animals and men,
Who gladly come. But soon 'tis evident
It lacks the space so many lives require.

He now * muh-kwah employs to walk around
The shore, and tramp with pondrous paw the soil ;
Which shall expand beneath his heavy tread
Until a wide, wide world is thus create.

The bear in earnest bends him to the task
And soon much soil is added,—mighty swamps,
And murky morass circle round the isle,
Of which our hero highly disapproves ;
And summoning muh-kwah, he bids him cease,
And tells him of such soil this must suffice :
Bears may admire the dense, dark, dismal swamp ;
But men and others love the higher land.

The island yet too narrow and confined
Is urged to be by all its living freight ;
And so as land-maker, there issues forth
†Wah-wah-shkash, bounding quickly, skirts the shores
With noble forest land, whose summits stand
Studded with stalwart maple, elm and beach,
Yet interspersed with valleys, deep ravines ;
While lofty hills and mounts their tops uprear.

These steep declivities please not the eye,
Fastidious of Nanabush, who stops him short,
And calls on ** Ma-man-gwa to try his skill,
And to a wondrous world make manifest,
His taste and talent for creating land.

Who taking on his brilliant wings some grains
Of dust most dry, he o'er the watery waste
Flits swiftly, scattering all around the isle
The earthly morsels which soon form themselves

*Muh-kwah. — Bear.

†Wah-wah-shkash. — Deer.

**Ma-man-gwa. — Butterfly.

In prairies broad and beautiful, bedecked
 With flowers of every hue, and belts of trees
 Breaking the dull monotony, which else
 Had tired the eye, and rendered less desired
 This land now coveted by all mankind.

Well-pleasing to the criticizing gaze
 Of Nanabush, these prairies smile around ;
 And to the butterfly of talent great
 For such a task, the contract he awards
 To consummate the continent required.

He now employs † o-mee-mee to compute
 The size of this vast island, stretching far
 Beyond the ken of any human age.

The dove sets forth, on pinion swift she flies ;
 But unto Nanabush returns no more,
 Bewildered in interminably flight.

He then sends forth * kah-gahze to obtain
 Admeasurement of all the land create.
 The raven ventures forth, but days and weeks
 Are found to intervene e're he returns.

At length with tired wing, and frame reduced,
 He perched one evening on a pine tree top
 Above the head of Nanabush, who chode
 Him for his dalliance. He made reply :—
 Think not that I have wasted precious time
 On pleasure, neither left undone my task.

The land created is so wide and vast,
 I scarce surveyed the swamps muk-kwah has made,
 And flew the forests o'er of wah-wah-shkash ;
 Nor winged my way on tired pinion wide
 O'er that expanse of space immeasurable,
 Which light-winged ma-man-gwa has covered
 With fertile prairies, e're with weary wing,
 I hastened home, and to my chief report
 What lands unlimited he rules supreme.

Then Nanabush rejoicingly replied :—
 Since thou this wondrous feat hast well performed ;
 Take as reward, thy lawful lasting right,
 All earthly kingdoms are thy ‡ o-nah-gun
 Whence thou shalt sup, nor ever lack for food.

†O-mee-mee.—Dove.

*Kah-gahze.—Raven.

‡O-nah-gun.—Dish.

Thus joy pervaded all the varied ranks
Of men, and birds, and beasts both wild and tame,
When they surveyed the forests fraught with game
And deep recesses of the shelt'ring swamps ;
And beauteous prairie, level like the sea,
And sparkling streams, and rivers rolling wide,
Their voices blended in one grateful song.

JOHN I. HINDLEY.

ERRATTA :

Chee-bi-yah-boog read Chee-bi-yah-booz, pages 2, 3, 4.
Thrust read thirst, page 3.
Looses read lesser, page 5.
Thrust read through, page 7.
Chides insert after word sorely, line six, page 8.
Ear read car, page 12.
Ooga-wush-kwa read ooza-wush-kwa, on page 12.
The direful read to direful, page 17.
Enconiums read encomiums, page 20.

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